

NEWS RELEASE

USDA Forest Service

Santa Fe National Forest



For Immediate Release

CONTACT: LAWRENCE LUJAN

(505) 438-7628

REUBEN MONTES

(505) 438-7892

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EAST SIDE OF SANTA FE NATIONAL FOREST ENTERS STAGE I FIRE RESTRICTIONS

(SANTA FE, NM)—The east side of Santa Fe National Forest will enter Stage I fire restrictions beginning Wednesday, April 19, at 8 a.m. “Forest land within the Española and Pecos/Las Vegas Ranger Districts are stressed due to the lack of winter and spring moisture. Seasonal winds, low relative humidity and increasing temperatures are causing conditions to become more severe,” explained Randy Garcia, Pecos/Las Vegas Acting Fire Management Officer-Fuels.

The Sangre de Cristo Mountains east of US Highway 285 have received less than normal moisture at this time and warrant the need for restrictions. Restrictions apply to National Forest lands around Española, Santa Fe, Pecos, Las Vegas, and Mora. National Forest lands west of US Highway 285 including areas around Los Alamos, Abiquiu, Jemez, Cuba and Coyote have received more moisture and do not warrant the need to enter into restrictions at this time.

First level (Stage 1) restrictions will limit campfires to developed camp and picnic grounds where grills are provided. Smoking is permitted only in vehicles, in developed campgrounds, or in areas cleared at least three feet in diameter of all flammable material.

Fire restrictions **will not** apply to the congressionally designated Wilderness areas on the Forest - **Pecos Wilderness, San Pedro Parks, Dome Wilderness, and Chama River Canyon Wilderness**, at this time. While the use of campfires is not restricted within the “Wilderness” at this time, people are asked to be cautious when using fire. “Make sure your campfire is dead out before leaving your camping area. When putting a campfire out, drown it with water, stirring with dirt and water until all the fuel is cold to the touch,” advised Claudia Standish, Forest WUI & Fire Prevention Specialist.

Stage 1 Fire Restrictions Entail:

- **Open Campfire Restrictions:**

Campfires, charcoal grills and stove fires **are prohibited** on National Forest lands, except in Forest Service developed camp and picnic grounds where grills are provided.

Pressurized liquid or gas stoves, lanterns and heaters are allowed.

- **Smoking Restrictions:**

Smoking is allowed within an enclosed vehicle or building; a developed recreation site; or while stopped in an area at least three feet in diameter and free of all flammable material.

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add one--Santa Fe N.F. Fire Restrictions

- **Fireworks:**

As always, fireworks are prohibited on all National Forest lands.

Violation of these regulations are punishable as a Class B misdemeanor, by a fine of not more than \$5000 for an individual or \$10,000 for an organization, or imprisonment for not more than six (6) months or both.

For additional fire information on fire activity and restrictions in New Mexico, call toll free 877-864-6985, or visit the Southwest Coordination Center website at <http://gacc.nifc.gov/swcc/>



NOTE TO MEDIA:

*Santa Fe N.F. includes national forest lands near Jemez, Cuba, Coyote, Gallina, Santa Fe, Los Alamos, Española, Pecos, Las Vegas and Mora .

There are 4 different stages (levels) of restriction/closures in response to Fire risk:

Stage I (1st Level)--No smoking outside of vehicles, or buildings. No open campfires outside of developed sites. No fireworks.

Stage II (2nd Level)--In addition to Stage I, adds prohibitions for explosives, chainsaw or other internal combustion engines (possibly during certain hours), welding, and using a motor vehicle off forest development roads; further restricts use of campfires.

Stage III (3rd Level)--The closure of specific areas of the Forest (as detailed in the Closure Order)

Stage IV (4th Level)--Full forest closures (as detailed in the Closure Order)